



Animal Talk



Summer Newsletter 2008

www.rspca-wigan.org.uk



Hello, and welcome to the summer edition of Animal Talk.

We hope you enjoy catching up on our news. Do get in touch if you have news for us, a view to share, an interesting article or help to offer.

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Dates For Your Diary:

Saturday 21st July

Garden Party
2 p.m. in Anne Scotson's Garden

Sunday 3rd August

Dog Show, Stall, Raffle & Microchipping
Mesnes Park - From 12 noon

Sunday 10th August

Charity Concert
St Paul's Labour Club Heather Grove

Sunday 28th September

Sponsored Dog Walk & Microchipping
Beacon Country Park - From 12 noon

Letters Page

There are people that I have met who are, alas, under the misapprehension that any organisation, society, or club with the title "Royal" in its name must, by assumption, be "rolling in dosh". A very handy assumption for those people who are unwilling or too mean to give a penny to those less fortunate than themselves.

The assumption is, of course, quite erroneous. The granting of the title "Royal" indicates The Monarch's interest in and, when possible, the active support for the work being done – in most cases mainly by volunteer workers.

Being a "Royal" Institution does not imply either that the organisation is supported by government funding - it is in honour of its work and aims. All registered, legally recognised charities have an official registration number. If you are in doubt about a charity under consideration for a donation, however small, to aid their work and intentions look for that number.

The RSPCA carry out essential work in the recovery, treatment, after-care and well-being of cruelly abused, stray and aged animals – all God's creatures and, at some time, someone's well-loved companion.

I do my best to support the work of the RSPCA - please "join-up" now.

Sincerely yours,

Colin Bean

(Erstwhile "Pte. Sponge" of "Dad's Army")

*** Fundraising Update ***

RSPCA WEEK 28th April to 4th May 2008 Collection of Pet Goods and Donations

Thank you to all our supporters for helping us at Tesco's National RSPCA Week. We raised a record amount of funds this year, totalling £1,048.58 at Wigan Store; £292.54 at Hindley, and £60.25 at Atherton; a grand total of £1,401.37. Unfortunately, we could not find many volunteers to collect at Hindley and Atherton.

Customers also donated approximately four "Wheelie-bin" loads of pet food. Because we do not have an Animal Centre in our Branch area, we have passed this on to needy pet owners and the people who foster animals in our care.

We are always in need of volunteers who can help out occasionally (or more regularly!) collecting at special events such as this. It is good fun, enjoyable to meet people, and a great way to get involved. If you would like to find out more do drop us a line, or call us on 01942 824165.

Well Done Gina!

In addition, for RSPCA Week, Gina Senior ran in the London Marathon in aid of the RSPCA Wigan Leigh and District Branch. Along with proceeds from a concert with Jimmy Cricket, Gina raised a massive £1,300 to fund the many welfare needs of animals in our large Branch area.



Here you can see Gina and her dog "Bonny" presenting our Chairman John Ashcroft with a cheque for the sponsorship raised.

(Photo courtesy of Wigan Evening Post)

A big thank you to everybody who so kindly sponsored Gina.

And Ian!

This is Ian and Bobby after the Bradford 10k run on Sunday, 20th April. Ian did it in 54 min 58 seconds. Two days later he ran from Standish back home to Longton, which is just over 13 miles, in practise for the Great North Run.

For more about Ian and his running challenges see page 5



Donation Appeal

We welcome any kind of generous donations including clothes, bric-a-brac, electrical goods and small furniture.

If you have any electrical goods or 3 or more bags please call our Charity Shop on 01942 248 493 to arrange a pick up.

*** Events Coming Soon ***

Garden Party – **Saturday 21st July 2008**, 2 p.m. in Anne Scotson's Garden, 22 Lynton Street, Leigh, WN7 5AW

WOW Festival Dog Show

On **Sunday the 3rd August** we will be holding a Companion Dog Show in Mesnes Park alongside the 'Wigan One World' 'WOW' festival.

Last year's event was a great success with 90 dogs of all shapes and sizes taking part. All dogs are welcome to attend as the only restriction is they must be 6 months old, dogs need not be K.C. registered. We will be having plenty of non pedigree and fun classes.

The entry fee is £2.00 per dog and you may enter as many classes as you like. Rosettes are on offer for 1 - 3 in each class with Supa Dupa Rosettes for the principle winners including Child Handlers. We will be taking entries from 11.00 a.m. and judging will start at 12 noon. When Avril Fishwick, President will open the Show.

The judge this year is Mrs Julie Woodcock a local lady who is very experienced in dogs after spending the last twenty years taking part in the running of dog clubs and showing her own Beagles.

Last year we were lucky enough to have the hottest day of the year so let's hope that the weather will be kind enough to us again. So for a good family day out with your companion dog, why not bring a chair and a picnic, and meet other like-minded people, and also the hard working committee of the R.S.P.C.A. As an extra on the day why not get your pet microchipped for only £10.00.



Charity Concert – **Sunday 10th August 2008**, St Paul's Labour Club Heather Grove, Leigh, WN7 5QS Guest Artist, Brian Dee, plus Bingo and Tombola. Tickets available from RSPCA Charity Shop.
Organised by Anne Scotson and Lisa Shaw

Dogs Day Out / Sponsored Dog Walk



On **Sunday 28th September** in Beacon Country Park, UpHolland, we will have a Sponsored Walk for dogs. Bring your dogs along for a lovely walk! (Meet in the main carpark, at the ranger centre / education area. **Registration from 12noon. Walk starts 1pm.** Sponsor **Forms are available at our Shops now.**)

If you don't have a dog please turn up to join us for the walk. We might be able to bring over some dogs from the RSPCA's Liverpool Animal Centre. You can sponsor these for £5 each, give them a great day out, and maybe help them find a home!

Micro-chipping available for £10, neutering, and welfare information will be on offer too.

Want to help out?

Both the dog show and the sponsored walk are great fun to get involved with. We would welcome any volunteers who can join us on the day or help us prepare. **We also need volunteers to drive to Liverpool and back to help transport dogs coming out of the centre for the walk.** Please call the office on 01942 824165 if you can volunteer.

Animal Testing and Vaccinations—an ethical dilemma?

Vaccination protects millions of people each year against diseases such as tetanus, tuberculosis, polio and diphtheria. Animals kept as companions or on farms are also routinely given vaccinations against common, often life-threatening, diseases such as canine distemper, rabies or pneumonia.

The RSPCA encourages vaccination of animals as it can have tremendous benefits for their health and welfare, yet vaccines cannot be used until they have been subjected to a whole series of tests. Many of these tests are carried out on animals and can cause them considerable suffering. This presents a serious ethical dilemma for the RSPCA and for caring animal owners.

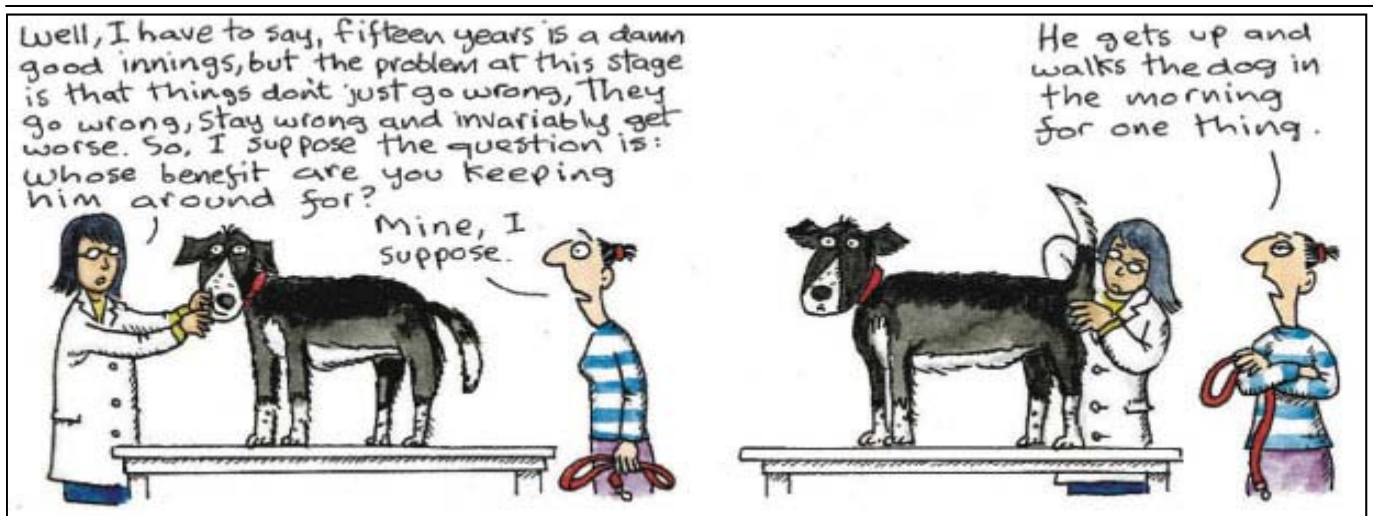
It is a legal requirement that each batch of vaccine is assessed to ensure it is safe and effective before it can be used. It is estimated that around 1.5 million animals are used in the EU each year for these purposes. Clearly, alternative methods of testing that do not involve the use of animals are urgently needed, but many different products are made and each requires a different test, so progress in developing these is slow.

The RSPCA is deeply concerned about the animals who are used to test vaccines and is working on a number of initiatives that aim to reduce the numbers of animals used and the suffering that they experience.

Ultimately the RSPCA wants all vaccine tests that use animals to be replaced by non-animal methods. In the mean time the RSPCA is campaigning for progress in improving the ethical evaluation of animal use and implementation of the 3Rs. This includes:

- Replacing animals with alternatives;
- Reducing the numbers of animals involved; and
- Refining procedures, housing and husbandry to minimise suffering and improve welfare.

To find out more visit: www.rspca.org.uk/vaccines



“Claire in the Community” Guardian, 20th February 2008

Four-Legged Friends Of Mesnes Park

Sue Turner, Secretary of Friends Of Mesnes Park (F.O.M.P.), who opened our WOW Dog Show last August, would like Animal Talk readers to tell her why they love to go in Mesnes Park. We know lots of you are interested in the wild creatures, and some of you care for feral cat colonies around this green oasis, too. Many of us enjoy walking through regularly with our dogs and enjoy meeting up with other dog owners. Let's support F.O.M.P. Call Sue on 01942 247161.

Dog Training Move

Aspull Dog Training Club has moved its venue for training sessions.

The club now holds its training nights every Wednesday at Aspull Rugby Club, Woods Road, From 7.45pm until 10pm.

For more information about the changes, call Barbara or Douglas on 01942 831025.

Ian Steps Out Again For The RSPCA

Last year Ian Marshall raised £756.55 for the RSPCA Wigan, Leigh and District Branch by running in The Great North Run in October (2007). Ian wanted to help his local Branch because wife Rose cares for many of the RSPCA animals at Gilmore Veterinary Practice in Standish, Wigan.

Ian will be running the same event this year in late September, but needs to collect sponsorship now, preferably from new supporters. To sponsor Ian call the Branch on 01942 824165, or use the form on the back page of this newsletter.

Alternatively, call in either of our two charity shops for a form, or call in Gilmore's at 52 High Street, Standish.

Ian would like to thank Pat Atkinson of RSPCA HQ for her organisational help, and he would recommend anyone who is considering holding a sponsored event of this nature to contact her for advice via 0300 123 0410, email: patkinson@rspca.org.uk.



News From Southport RSPCA

Southport RSPCA Branch Animal Shelter is now fully re-open after extensive rebuilding work. For more information call 01704 567624. Warrington RSPCA Branch Animal Home have just re-opened their new cattery Tel: 01942 632 944. Congratulations to both our neighbours and best wishes.



In memory of Ashley

Pam Shaw, entertainer, from Lower Ince said goodbye to her rescue-dog Ashley who died recently. Ashley was probably 13 as Pam had had her since she was 6 or 7 and was a popular character in Mesnes Park. Pam hopes other people will consider giving a home to an adult rescue dog too.

STOP PRESS: The following pets came to us for help on the day of publication.

One Good Home Wanted For Two Good Cats – In fact, one is an ‘Angel’

‘Garfield’ - A large bushy Ginger boy ‘wuss’ puss, only 13 months old, and his companion: ‘Angel’ a petite, short-haired, light tortoiseshell feline girl, are looking for a new pad together. Their loving owner is having to move to no-pets accommodation in August.

Are You a Reader With an Empty Hearth and Heart For ‘Rocks’ To Fill?

‘Rocks’ – A handsome tan-coloured Rottweiler X Staffs Bull Terrier boy canine, only 18 months old. Very loving, but has a loud bark if left alone for long periods.

Please note that all animals rehomed by the Wigan Branch are home-visited with a right for adopters to return them to us. They are all initially vaccinated, micro-chipped and neutered at considerable cost* (£150 for dogs, £82 for cats). We therefore have to ask for a minimum adoption fee (£70 for dogs, £35 for cats) i.e., less than half of this cost. In addition we have to pay boarding and other homing costs.

***N.B. Vets have reduce their chargers by approx. One-half in order to offer us these discounted ‘package’ deals.**

Recent Highlights From Our Local Inspectors

To read the full 2007 reports - including details of abuse and prosecutions - from the Northern Region Inspectorate please visit the news section on our website at www.rspca-wigan.org.uk

Here is an extract from the reports, looking at successful rescues in our area:

“The prize for the luckiest animal must go to the cocker spaniel that was hit by a vehicle on the M65 motorway. The dog was knocked across two lanes of traffic, and ended up on the central reservation. With the assistance of the Highways Agency, David Cottingham retrieved the dog and found that it only had a few bruises and scratches - to add to its luck, David discovered that the dog had been microchipped and we were therefore able to reunite it with its owner.

Another animal which had a lucky escape was ‘Harvey’ the cat. ‘Harvey’ was found impaled on railings in Shawclough. It took two hours for members of the public, ACO Donna Holt, the fire brigade and a vet to rescue him, as the railings had gone right through the cat’s abdomen. Luckily for ‘Harvey’, none of his vital organs had been pierced, and he was rescued successfully. [An ACO is an RSPCA Animal Collection Officer.]

Other rescues include ducks stuck in ice, a dog stuck on the roof of a shed, a bat caught up in fishing line, a starling trapped in a soil-pipe, a cat stuck behind a bath panel (the cat had entered the property via an air vent!), a kitten stuck in an industrial shredder and - an ACO’s favourite – a swan stuck in a sewerage tank!

The easiest rescue of 2007 was the capture and confinement of a baraband parakeet. The parakeet had escaped from its cage and was flying around outside. ACO Donna Holt applied common sense and her vast experience with birds, got the bird’s cage and left it outside with the door open. The bird flew down and climbed into its cage. Result!

Collections during the past year were as bizarre as ever, and included a vulture found in a park in Royton, an Indian lizard found in Nelson, a gecko unintentionally imported from Spain, and a lizard unintentionally imported from Thailand.

As is the case every year, we are extremely grateful to all of the branches for their support, without which our lives would be extremely difficult, if not impossible.”

Brett Witchalls
Chief Inspector, 434 – Group N3

Editor note: Spot the two unique features of the RSPCA as an animal charity -
One: we go to the expense of prosecuting people for abusing animals and
Two: our ‘rescue’ animals are rescued from real suffering.



New Homes Found

These two kittens came into the care of the RSPCA recently and were speedily found new homes by Gilmore’s Vets of Standish, who had been looking after them.

We wish all the animals taken into our care were so easy to home!

So often we are the last hope!

If you would consider taking on an older animal we, or any of the RSPCA centres, would especially like to hear from you.



Our Thanks To

The family and friends of Mr Ken Baker who have given us a donation in his memory.
Mrs Noreen Bond's friends at Wrightington Hospital who made a collection in her memory.
The nephew of Miss Harriet Hough, who has made a pecuniary bequest. Hettie used to help re-home animals for the Branch in Manchester

We have also received a generous legacy from Mr James Herbert Wood of Standish, a friend of the late Miss Riding a Branch Treasurer for many years and creator of the original PAWS Fund. Legacies, such as that made by James Wood, allow the branch to both better meet its running costs, and, crucially to plan ahead and invest in new work to benefit animals and owners of Wigan, Leigh and District (Which include Skelmersdale). If you feel that you could remember the RSPCA in this way please do contact us in confidence to discuss your wishes.

'Half-Way' Homes / 'Foster Homes' Needed Urgently



We are now well into the usual peak of too many unwanted animals for too few available good homes! Our few foster homes can only accommodate cats, kittens and rabbits and they are already full.

Nearby Animal Homes home told us they have no room for Wigan animals until August.

We have at the moment:

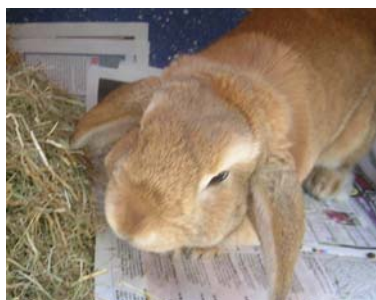
Sheba - a lovely black **adult male cat**

Henry - a gorgeous **ginger adult cat**

1 **lop eared rabbit**

2 **female kittens**

5 **male kittens!!**



We also know of a number of dogs, including staffies who need to leave their current homes, and have nowhere to go until nearby Centres have spare kennels.

These animals all need good homes to go to, but we would also be very keen to hear from you if you would be able to foster any of them, or any dogs we are asked to care for.

Will you offer them a 'half-way' house?

The RSPCA will provide assistance to fosters by way of support, food and veterinary treatment. You would also greatly help the animals get used to living in a home environment.



Poison Alert

The RSPCA has heard of some dogs being poisoned (and sadly dying) as a result of eating cocoa mulch which is commonly on sale for use in gardens.

Like all cocoa based products it is very tasty for dogs, but the theobromine it contains can kill.

Do take care if you use this in your garden.

Competition

How many cats are pictured in this newsletter (real or drawn?) Send us your answer using the form on the back page. Correct answers will be drawn from a hat on 1st August.

The winner will get a £5 voucher for use in either of our shops.

The winner of our last competition (how many paw-prints in the last newsletter) was Colin Bean.

Trustees and Volunteers - Can you help?

Volunteers are the life-blood of any charity, and you can help in many different ways, giving yourself new experiences, putting your skills and interests to use, and meeting new people. Just some of the roles we need volunteers for are: photographing animals for rehoming, helping in our shops, fundraising, and home-visiting people who would like to adopt.

Trustees are at the heart of every charitable organisation. Our branch trustees have ultimate responsibility for the branch and must act in the best interests of the charity. We have vacancies for trustees at the moment and would like to hear from anybody with interest and time to spare who would like to find out more about this (very rewarding) commitment.

Call us on 01942 824165 or use the form below if you would like to find out more.

Get In Touch And Give us Your Comments!

Please also send your much-needed donations to help our local work continue to:

RSPCA Wigan, Leigh & District Branch, 54a Market St, Wigan, WN1 1HX.

Registered Charity Number 232249.

Please remember to always quote all this information when making out donations or a bequest.

Please use our website www.rspca-wigan.org.uk or email contactus@rspca-wigan.co.uk

Name : _____]

Address : _____]
_____]

Postcode : _____] Phone number : _____]

Sponsorship for Ian Amount £ _____ Number of cats competition
Donation Amount £ _____ Answer : _____]

I am interested in (please circle): Volunteering Trusteeship Dog Walk Sponsor form

N.B. Please sign and date your form:

You can make your donation worth 25% more to us, at no extra cost to you, simply by making the Gift Aid Declaration below. If you are a UK taxpayer and would like us to be able to reclaim the tax on the donations you make, please sign the declaration.

Notes: - 1 - You must pay an amount of income tax or capital gains tax at least equal to the tax the charity reclaims - currently 28.2p for each £1 you give. 2 - If your circumstances change, you can cancel this declaration by notifying the Charity. 3 - If you pay a higher rate of tax, you can claim further relief in your Self Assessment Tax Return.

I am a UK Taxpayer and I wish to Gift Aid any donations I have made or make to the RSPCA Wigan, Leigh & District Branch.

Signed : _____ Date : _____